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INFO RUEHJS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
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RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 2105
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3914
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4811
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2361
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2948
RUEHBA/AMCONSUL PERTH 1037
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 2880
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 001551

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: ISLAMIC-ORIENTED PARTY SUFFERS ELECTORAL SETBACK

REF: A. JAKARTA 633
[1](#)B. 07 JAKARTA 2156

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. Virtually all of Indonesia's other political parties ganged up against the Islamic-oriented Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) on August 10 to ensure a landslide re-election victory for the mayor of Bandung (the third-largest city in Indonesia and capital of the important province of West Java). The major parties united to defeat the scrappy PKS in the wake of the party's recent triumph in the West Java gubernatorial election and its other recent victories. The campaign demonstrated a newfound determination by the big secular-oriented parties to curb PKS's momentum by building alliances and mobilizing their formidable party machines. END SUMMARY.

COUNTERING PKS IN BANDUNG

[1](#)2. (SBU) An Islamic-oriented party has suffered an electoral setback. According to a quick count from the August 10 mayoral election in Bandung, West Java, Mayor Dada Rosada won a second term with nearly two-thirds of the vote. Rosada and his running mate Ayi Vivananda were backed by the nation's largest political parties, including the Golkar Party, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) and President Yudhoyono's Democrat Party (PD), along with important Muslim parties and a score of smaller parties. Rosada took 64 percent of the vote in the initial count. PKS's ticket came in second with 26 percent.

[1](#)3. (U) Bandung, with a population of almost three million, is the economic, cultural and educational center of West Java and one of Indonesia's most important urban areas. It is also the capital of West Java, which is Indonesia's most populous province with over 40 million residents.

THE BIG PARTIES HIT BACK

14. (C) The two major secular-oriented parties, Golkar and PDI-P--usually election rivals--teamed up in a "revenge" effort following their defeat in the April 2008 West Java gubernatorial elections, according to respected political polling expert JA Denny. In the governor's race, PKS overcame overwhelming odds to defeat the heavyweights Golkar and PDI-P (ref A). PKS appealed to grassroots issues like rising prices and used its efficient party machine to sweep past its divided competition and win the governorship.

15. (C) In the Bandung race, by contrast, the major political parties formed a strategic alliance against PKS. Moreover, Golkar and PDI-P both healed internal divisions in their respective parties, whereas in the West Java governor's race the major parties not only fought each other but faced severe infighting as well, Andrian Rompis, a political observer at Panjajaran University in Bandung, told DepPol/C. PKS did not so much lose ground in the mayoral election as Golkar and PDI-P regained momentum, he explained. The last time the major parties united against PKS was in the August 2007 Jakarta governor's election, which PKS also lost in a hotly contested race (Ref B).

16. (C) PKS draws its strength from urban youth and middle class professionals, making Bandung fertile ground for the party which has surprised many observers with its election successes this year. In the mayoral race, PKS did manage to do well on the university campuses and among many young professionals, acting Bandung mayor Edi Siswadi, a civil servant, told DepPol/C (the elected mayor is required to step down during the election timeframe and is temporarily replaced by a bureaucrat). Siswadi confirmed that the major parties came together out of fear of another PKS victory and

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concerns that PKS would institute conservative Muslim policies if it controlled the city. (Note: Siswadi will lead a delegation to Fort Worth, Texas, next week as part of Bandung's sister-city relationship which dates back to 1995.)

SIGN OF THINGS TO COME?

17. (C) In a topsy-turvy election season, the Bandung results provided insight into upcoming electoral trends. Responding to earlier shocking losses, the major political parties are healing wounds and campaigning harder, taking advantage of their vast resources. Though the Bandung result has taken off a bit of its luster, PKS is savvy and will no doubt adjust.

HUME